

Loud and Clear

Summer 2018

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Notes from the Branch Manager's Desk

Spring has sprung! To some of us, the year has just begun. It is that time of the year for in-depth house cleaning, reorganization and gardening. If you have plans for any of the aforementioned activities, Access Services will gladly provide book recommendations to suit your interest. Talking Book customers can visit [this link for a mini bibliography on Gardening for people with Disabilities](#) and [this one for one on Clutter](#).

2. Just a heads-up on some of the innovative things going on at Access Services, Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL). We are a pilot testing site for the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped MOCA project; and we have been authorized as a pilot site for the Duplication on Demand Project (DoD). Both projects will provide us with greater circulation functionality; and in turn will provide patrons with ready access to books and other resources provided under the auspices of the Talking Book program.

3. I am glad to report the addition of a new member to the Access Services team. Masuma Sarwar recently joined us as a Reader Advisor. Please stop by or give her a call at 703-324-8388. She will be reaching out to her assigned customers; and if you are lucky to hear a new voice when you call Access Services, please be kind and make her feel welcome.

Moving forward in 2018, as we say goodbye to winter and welcome to spring, I hope you have fun in this season of rejuvenation.

~ Rose Asuquo

Branch Manager, Access Services Library.

Summer Reading Adventure 2018

The theme for this year's Summer Reading Adventure is **READING TAKES YOU EVERYWHERE!** It runs from June 15 to September 1 and Access Services encourages all our younger readers to participate. All you have to do is read over the summer; list the books you've read, and then turn in your reading log to your local library and receive a coupon booklet with lots of prizes and discounts for all kinds of summer fun.

To earn prizes, you must read a certain number of books depending on your age:

Preschool-3rd grade: read 15 books

Grades 4-6: read 10 books

Grades 7-12: read five books

([Check our list of suggested authors for each age group](#))

To participate;

Register online at [Fairfax County Library website](#).

Complete a paper or online reading log (either 15, 10 or 5 books, depending on your age—and youngest readers can have books read to them).

Visit a library branch by September 1 to pick up your coupon book.

Use the coupons to play mini-golf; eat ice cream; watch a soccer game; go to a water park, and much more!

READING TAKES YOU EVERYWHERE equals fun and adventure this summer!

More Than Just Reading

The Summer Reading Adventure also includes Special Events and Contests. The library offers lots of fun events and fantastic programs all summer long. These include The Bubble Lady, Kuumba Kids, Rainbow Rock Band, The Wizard of Reading and much more. Special events for teens include Personalized Pottery, How to Draw Cartoons, Rock Art Collage, Robotics, our Teen Cover Art Contest and more. There is also an essay contest for rising 7th, 8th and 9th graders cosponsored with the For Love of Country Foundation.

For more information visit your library where you can pick up a copy of 'Free Events', the library's schedule of all upcoming activities. You can also find this publication online.

Audio –Described Videos

Access Services has a special collection of audio described videos available to loan out to our patrons. These special videos include narrated descriptions of the movie's key visual elements, without interference with the ongoing dialogue.

We are currently updating our collection. Additional movies are slated to be purchased this summer. If you need more information or to suggest titles, contact Access Service at 703-324-8380 or email access@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Enhancing Your Library

A special thank you goes to the Fraternal Order of Eagles, ALVA Aeire/Auxillary #871 for their donation of \$1,000. We are grateful for this generosity, which helps Access Services in providing innovative programs and services to individuals with disabilities.

Please consider the Access Services branch as part of your charitable giving. Donations are needed to maintain high quality library services. Contributions in any amount are welcome and are tax deductible.

Checks may be sent to Access Services, made payable to the Fairfax Library Foundation with "For Access Services" specified in the memo line or cover letter. For more information, contact Access Services at 703-324-8380 or call the Library Foundation at 703-324-8300.

The Access Services Advisory Group

Formerly known as the Friends of Access Services, this group of volunteers includes as part of its mission, encouraging and supporting accessible library services, as well as communication with Talking Book users. Anyone interested in supporting library services to individuals with disabilities is welcome to join. To find out more about how you can join this group, please contact Access Services at 703-324-8380 or email us at access@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Friends Helping Friends

(Submissions by members of the Access Service Advisory Group)

Even as they have changed their name to the Access Services Advisory Group, the idea and the column of 'Friends Helping Friends' will remain the same. The helpful tips and shared experiences are always presented from the user's point of view. As stated above, these friends are a group of customers and other interested parties, who serve as an

advisory panel for Access Services. They exchange practical and useful information and believe that other AS customers and/or LOUD AND CLEAR readers can benefit from these exchanges.

The Friends Helping Friends column has been appearing in LOUD AND CLEAR since 2014 and has touched on a variety of topics. We hope you have found them as interesting and informative as we all have. It is so beneficial for us to share and learn from one another. At a recent meeting, we discussed how nice it would be to hear from some of the people reading these Friends Helping Friends articles. So, we invite you to do just that.

You can give us feedback about an article, suggest a topic or, even send in a contribution yourself on something you feel is in keeping with the spirit of this column. If you are a new customer or, have not had a chance to read past issues, you can find [previous issues of Loud and Clear here](#). The issues are available in both audio and PDF formats.

Please send your comments and suggestions to:
access@fairfaxcounty.gov, ATTN Ken, or via regular mail to Access Services, Ken Plummer, 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 123, Fairfax, VA 22035.

Navigating Air Travel

by Janet S. Horwitz

I am writing this article so that I can share my personal experience of air travel for people with vision impairment. I have low vision and cannot see well enough to read the signs for gates, etc. in the airport. In the past, this was not a significant problem for me because I always travelled with my husband. He always guided me to wherever we needed to be. Unfortunately, my husband passed away suddenly a little over a year ago. I abruptly realized that if I wanted to continue to travel, I would need to be willing to rely on kindness and assistance from strangers. It was emotionally difficult for me to come to this decision, but it was either

accepting this or not travelling anymore, and my children and grandchildren all live far away.

Requesting assistance from an airport or an airline is very easy. The hard part is accepting the fact that you need to sit in a wheelchair and rely upon an airport employee, a complete stranger, to guide you around. Once you accept this as the new reality, traveling can again be a pleasurable and stress-free experience for you.

The first step is for you or a friend to call the airline on which you have booked your flight and request wheelchair assistance. Some websites ask for this information when making an online reservation. These sites then ask if you have a physical issue that makes you unable to walk or if you have a visual impairment. Whether you request the wheelchair by telephone or online, make sure that you specify that you need a wheelchair at both the departure and arrival airports.

Planning ahead is the key. Advance planning can allay any fears you might have. You will already have arranged for a friend or relative to take you to the airport and to meet you at baggage claim upon arrival. The rest of the time airport personnel will be assisting you, so it is helpful to think about your concerns and get answers. These are some of the questions I had -

Who will wait with me until they bring a wheelchair?

What about food for the flight?

What if I need to go to the restroom while in the wheelchair?

Will there be a wheelchair when the plane lands?

Should I wait until all other passengers disembark and have the airline steward help me deplane and get into the wheelchair or should I go off with passengers in my row?

Ask all these questions in advance and have a plan. This will mean you can relax the day of your trip.

As for the first question, you should make sure that whoever drives you to the airport stays with you until the wheelchair arrives. This may mean that you stay seated in their car outside in front of the terminal.

As for your concern about food and restrooms, again, plan ahead. If you think you might get hungry during the flight, you should pack a sandwich or snack to take with you or have the wheelchair assistant stop at a quick food stand and get you something. [NOTE: You should plan on tipping extra for this service.] And you might want to have the assistant stop at the restroom on the way to your gate.

As for your concerns about assistance at the arrival airport, when you first board the plane you should ask the airline steward about arrangements for a wheelchair upon arrival. Confirm that the wheelchair has been requested. Also, if you will need help transferring from the plane, ask if you should wait until other passengers have disembarked.

I can tell you honestly that I am a worrywart. I thought about all these issues the first time I was going to fly alone and use the airport wheelchair assistance. I spent a good deal of time thinking and worrying before coming up with solutions to address each of my concerns. Because I came up with a plan in advance, I felt very confident the day of my first solo trip. Since then, I have flown both within the US and to Europe, and I am proud of myself that I have discovered a very comfortable way of traveling.

Navigating Air Travel (Addendum)

by Kathleen Tozer

(The following are airline travel tips added by Kathleen Tozer, a totally blind person. Her step-by-step approach reflects her efforts to be organized, which is essential for a successful trip.)

1. I have found that some airlines offer accessibility help desks for making telephone reservations and accommodations. These people tend to be a little more patient in working out itineraries and making sure all pertinent information is passed along. So, when you call, ask if they offer this service.
2. Before arriving at the airport, I have my itinerary (I don't usually have the actual ticket). I place the credit card I used to book the flight, my I.D. and money for tips in accessible places, so that I am not hunting for these at the airport. This is why I love zippered compartments, including a light jacket with zippered pockets.
3. As I often take a taxi or Metro Access to the airport, I let them know that I will need help to connect with a skycap. Once you have accomplished this, the rest should go smoothly. This person will take care of your luggage, get you checked in and provide assistance for you to get to the gate.
4. As soon as you are through the gate, let the person escorting you know if you want to stop at the rest room or stop to purchase something. I always ask to be taken to a Family Bathroom so that I don't have to negotiate the larger ones.
5. When I arrive at my gate, I ask to be taken to the desk to let them know I am there and will need assistance boarding the plane. I also ask them

where they would like me to sit so that they will remember me. Once seated, I ask the person helping to show me where the desk is in relation to where I am, in case I have to go up for any reason.

6. If no one is at the desk, I ask the assistant if there is anything indicating a gate change. This happened one time and I almost missed my flight, waiting at the wrong gate.

7. As soon as I am taken to my seat on the airplane, I ask them to point out my call button and air controls.

8. Sometimes they want to put me in the bulkhead seat (there is no seat in front of you); but I never take this as you have to put personal items in the overhead compartment. I try never to let things out of my immediate reach.

9. The assistant who comes to get you from the plane can take you to luggage area and out to catch a taxi, if needed.

10. I always tie colorful yarn around the handle of my suitcase since I cannot point it out on the luggage carousel. This is helpful for whomever is looking for it.

I always find, after taking one of these trips, that I am inspired by how many lovely people I met along the way who helped to make my trip enjoyable.

Thank you Janet. Thank you, Kathy. Thank you for providing us with these air travel tips.

Staff News

The Access Services branch and the Administration Department at FCPL combined to celebrate their volunteers at the Volunteer Luncheon on

April 26. We appreciate all the volunteers and the work they do. The volunteers enjoyed the decorations, the fellowship and the recognition they have earned.

As part of the festivities, the Access Services Berkey Awards were given to the staff member of the year and to the volunteer of the year. The award recognizes the recipient's consistent hard work, pleasant attitude and positive contributions to the low vision community. The volunteer receives a monetary gift and the staff member receives a certificate. **Dr. and Mrs. Berkey** are long-time supporters of the Fairfax County Public Library generally, and of Access Services, particularly. This year's recipients were **Carol Jones**, staff member, and **Ray Walsh**, volunteer. Congratulations and a heartfelt thank you to you both!

Our Circulation Manager is **Jerry Herrera**. Jerry had just been hired when we last went to press. Jerry started his career with FCPL in 1999 as a Sunday Circulation Manager at Pohick Regional Library. Over the years he has worked at Richard Byrd and Burke Centre Libraries as the Circulation Manager, moved to Access Services two years ago as a Reader Advisor, and was appointed as the Circulation Manager in March. Jerry says, "I hope to match the passion, skills and knowledge of all staff and volunteers of Access Services in serving the needs of our community."

We also welcome **Masuma Sarwar** to the staff as a Reader Advisor. Masuma transferred to Access Services from the Technical Operations office of the Fairfax County Public Library system in May 2018. Previously, she has worked as a library page and a volunteer in the branches. Masuma states, "I love both libraries and reading, and I am glad you do too."

She is looking forward to getting to know the Access Services customers better and enjoys sending you the books that you will enjoy reading. Please do not hesitate to contact her at any time with any questions, suggestions, or concerns that you may have. Her contact information is: phone, 703-324-8388, email, Masuma.Sarwar@fairfaxcounty.gov.

Circulation Manager **Jerry Herrera** will be attending the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) Bi-Annual conference June 16 - June 21.

Reading Roundup

The Access Services staff recommend the following titles for a summer get-a-way or beach read. Hope you find one to enjoy and don't forget the sun block.

The Island House by Nancy Thayer. **DB 85021.**

Courtney will never forget the wonderful time she spent on Nantucket with her roommate from college, Robin. Years pass and Courtney is now an English Professor in Kansas. Courtney wants to experience one more summer in this beautiful place. Her reason is personal. She needs to know if Robin's brother, James, has the same feelings she secretly had for him... Do you want to know more about it, just read "**The Island House**" ~ Yadira

(recommended and annotated by Yadira)

Three Men in a Boat (To Say Nothing of the Dog) by Jerome K. Jerome
DB 66776

This is a tale of three overworked Englishmen who take a boating holiday on the Thames. George, William, and the narrator--accompanied by Montmorency, the dog--anticipate the joys of long, lazy summer days but instead face uncooperative camping equipment, inclement weather, rampant hypochondria, and other disasters. 1889.

(recommended by Masuma)

Bad Monkey Carl Hiaasen **DB 76893**

When a tourist fishes a human arm out of the ocean near Key West, the horrified sheriff instructs Detective Yancy to pass it off to the Miami morgue. Instead, Yancy attempts to solve what becomes a very convoluted case. Strong language, some violence, and some descriptions of sex. Bestseller. 2013.

(recommended by Ken)

Hounded by David Rosenfelt **DB 79471**

Attorney Andy Carpenter's good friend, policeman, Pete Stanton, tells him that ex-convict Danny Diaz has been killed, leaving behind an eight-year-old son and a basset hound. Pete needs Andy to take care of the boy and the dog--and to help clear Pete of Danny's murder. Some strong language. 2014.

(recommended by Carol)

Andy Carpenter is a defense attorney. Ex-con, Danny Diaz has been murdered and Andy's good friend, police officer Pete Stanton, has been arrested for the murder. There is an investigation and a jury trial, and a plot twist at the end. The author's style is lightly humorous. This is a fast-paced, enjoyable read. ~ Carol

My Grandmother Asked Me to Tell You She's Sorry by Frederik Backman **DB 83204**

Seven-year-old Elsa is acknowledged as weird. The grandmother she lives with is flat-out crazy, but she shares tales of the fairyland of Miamas. When her grandmother dies, Elsa is entrusted with delivering letters of apology and learns about her place in the world. Translated from the original 2013 Swedish edition.

(recommended by Carol)

Where'd You Go Bernadette? By Maria Semple **DB 75351**

Seattle. Eighth-grader Bee's request for a family trip to Antarctica is the last straw for her mother, Bernadette, who has become so socially inept that she hired a virtual assistant in India to handle her life. Just before the trip, Bernadette vanishes. Heartbroken Bee investigates. Some strong language. Bestseller. 2012.

(recommended by Carol)

The plot progresses through the letters, documents and emails that Bee reads. Fast-paced, very funny. A touching story and a delightful read. ~ Carol

Henderson, the Rain King by Saul Bellow **DB 13757**

In his search for identity, an American millionaire travels to a remote area of Africa, where he is captured by a native tribe. His friendship with the king wins him the title of rain god, and he becomes deeply involved with the natives and participates in a strange experiment.

(Recommended by Rob)

Upcoming Holidays

Access Services will close on the following holidays. Remember to order extra books to Keep You Reading, especially on the long weekends.

Wednesday, July 4 (Fourth of July)

Monday, September 3 (Labor Day)

Friday, September 14 (FCPL Staff Day)

Wednesday, October 10 (Columbus Day)

Monday, November 12 (Veteran's Day Observed)

AS: In the Community

Rose Asuquo (Branch Manager) and **Ken Plummer** (Outreach Manager) have been busy promoting Access Services throughout the community.

They were invited to a recent Library Board of Trustees Meeting to present information about Access Services. They were able to educate and inform our trustees about the services provided and the programs that enrich the lives of a sometimes under-served population. The Trustees asked questions, suggested additional organizations to contact, and were enthusiastic to learn about Access Services.

Rose and Ken have also been involved with a production for Channel 16. Channel 16 is the Fairfax County produced cable television station. There is a program that illustrates multiple aspects and programs of the Fairfax County Public Library called "CHECK IT OUT." In an upcoming show there will be a segment that features Access Services, the Talking Book Program and the Home Delivery Service.

Ken has initiated a program that has increased the awareness of and the accessibility to our Home Delivery service. The Home Delivery service enables Fairfax County citizens who are unable to visit one of our local library branches due to a permanent or temporary disability to receive Fairfax County books through the United States mail. Customers can now have their initial phase (pick up) of this program happen at any of the branch libraries through the Blue Bags at Branches program.

Voting Reminders

The Fairfax County Office of Elections reminds us that the November elections will be for U. S. Senator and for Members of Congress. A valid photo ID is required for voting.

If you are interested in voting an absentee ballot, the request must be made by either mail, fax, email or online by 5:00 p.m. on the Tuesday before any election. (This November that would be, October 30). Absentee ballots must be received at the Office of Elections by 7:00 p.m. on Election Day. In-person absentee voting begins 45 days before each election.

For more information contact the Fairfax County Office of Elections by the following means

Office hours: Monday-Wednesday, Friday 8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.;
Thursday, 8 a.m.-7 p.m.

Phone: 703-222-0776

Email: voting@fairfaxcounty.gov

Address: [12000 Government Center Parkway Suite 323, Fairfax, VA 22035](#)

Web Corner: Three to See and an App

Outdoor Summer Concerts in Fairfax County

[Fairfax County park performances website](#)

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/performances>

The Fairfax County Park Authority continues the tradition of FREE summer music concerts. There are multiple park locations throughout the county, something will certainly be close by. There is a wide variety of music presented; from classical to bluegrass to big band to the blues as well as children's performances. At each location there is a different artist every week. Share a picnic supper, catch up with neighbors and friends and enjoy the wonderful music.

Fairfax County Public Library.

Fairfax County Public Library website

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/library/>

As always, there is a world of information available at the Fairfax County Public Library website. Once you are on the site, the easiest way to find lists of best sellers or books in specific genres is to scroll down, click on 'Books, Movies Audio' then click on the 'FCPL catalog'. In the middle of the page, look for "Recommended reading or Best Sellers."

Five Books The Best Books on Everything

fivebooks.com

Five Books has a simple premise: "We ask experts to recommend the best five books in their subject and explain their selection in an interview." The project is based in London and features a U.S. editor. Interviewees include authors, academics, entertainers, and public intellectuals. Visitors can check out the latest and most recent interviews on the site's homepage and browse previous interviews by subject tags.

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From our colleagues at the 'Touch and Listen' newsletter of the Florida Braille and Talking Book Library

App Review: Be My Eyes

Be My Eyes is a free, mobile app designed as an aid for people who are blind or visually impaired. When you download the app onto your Apple or Android device, you will be asked if you are blind or sighted. Users who select blind will be able to press a button to connect with the first available volunteer. The volunteer can assist with questions such as, letting the user know the expiration date on a food item container, or the color of their socks.

NLS News and Reminders

Inactive BARD account. This first note is for those who download books in BARD. If you have A BARD account and you don't download any items in a year, your account will be moved into an Inactive /Suspended status. If this happens just notify Access Services and we will quickly reset your status.

Bookshelf Feature. The 'bookshelf' feature is used to navigate between multiple books or magazines on a single cartridge. With the cartridge inserted into the player, hold down the square green play/stop button until you hear the word 'bookshelf.' After this, the number of books (or magazines) on the cartridge will be spoken. When you hear the title that you want to listen to, press the green play/stop button again and your selection will play.

Gentle Reminder. The Talking Book Machines are the property of the U.S. Government and if for any reason you discontinue the program the machines and any cartridges should be returned to us.

Right selection and quantity. We want to keep you reading. Please let us know if you are not getting the right genre of books, if you are getting too many or not enough books. Let us know and we can help you. 703-324-8380.

Ambassadors. You are our best ambassadors. If you have neighbors, friends or relatives that like to read but have some vision issues please let them know about the Talking Book Program.

Contact Us

If you have questions, comments or suggestions concerning the Loud & Clear newsletter, please call Ken Plummer at 703-324-8389. You may also e-mail him at access@fairfaxcounty.gov.



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upon request. Call 703-324-8380 or TTY
703- 324-8365.